



FAITH TRAINER

Faith Trainer Guide
Helping People Follow Jesus

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Preface

For many years, I have been challenged with the idea that, as a pastor, I should be doing more than keeping the aquarium—I should be fishing for men. Even more, my task is “to equip the saints for the work of ministry” (Eph. 4:11-12)¹. In other words, not only should I fish for men, but I should be helping regular believers do the same. This guide was written with that goal in mind.

There are many ways that Christians and churches seek to help people follow Jesus. One distinguishing feature of this guide is that it puts the disciple-making task into the hands of regular Christians. The Lord has allowed us to live in a world with billions of people, and the only effective way to reach them with the gospel is for church leaders to train God's people to fulfill the Great Commission.

Faith Trainer Guide: Helping People Follow Jesus is designed to help you make disciples of the lost people in your life. Although this guide is designed for self-study, a small group of believers can do the study together. If you are the leader of a small group, just make sure each member of your group has a copy of this guide. Then as a group, share your answers and discuss the disciple-making principles and insights the Lord has given you.

There is a companion curriculum disciple-makers can use to help a new believer grow called *Spiritual Basics*. Both documents may be downloaded for free at www.faithtrainer.com.

Gratitude and Permissions

The *Spiritual Basics* lessons come directly from and with the permission of www.T4TOnline.org, as does some of the stylistic formatting of this guide. Much thanks go to Ying Kai, Steve Smith, and David Garrison for their excellent work in assisting people to become better disciple-makers. Other key influences found in this material include the work of Steve Sjogren, Lee Thomas, Bill Fay, and Jim Petersen.

Because it is my desire that God use this guide for the greatest benefit to His Kingdom:

- You may distribute this guide to others on the condition that you give it to them for free. “Freely you have received, freely give.”
- You may translate this guide into other languages.
- You may make changes in the content of this guide so that it better fits your context.

Getting Started

You are capable of leading your lost friends and loved ones to Christ and then helping them grow spiritually. You are uniquely gifted to do this most important work. No written instruction guide, no book, and no website can do what you can do: Be a living witness for Christ before your friends. No one knows your friends like you do, and no one cares like you do for their eternal salvation and spiritual health.

Remember: You are not in this alone. God has prepared His entire family to assist you. So as you pray for your lost friends, ask other Spirit-filled believers to pray with you. If (and when!) your friends come to Christ, remember that they will need a spiritual family. You may be very instrumental not only in assisting your friends to grow, but also in introducing them to a larger spiritual family—people who can provide an exponentially

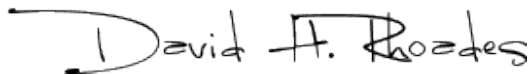
¹ Unless otherwise noted, the English Standard Version (ESV) will be used throughout this guide.

greater amount of encouragement and instruction than you can provide alone.

A word of caution: Some people who come to faith in Christ may not easily “fit” into the culture of some churches. These new believers still need a spiritual family. The “church” some new believers need may have some untraditional forms—forms that may be surprisingly more like the 1st-century church than what many of us experience. Whatever happens, avoid the temptation to “give up” on your lost loved ones just because you think they wouldn't fit into your church.

My prayer is that God uses you to accomplish His task of making disciples of your loved ones. The Lord Jesus, who has been given all authority in heaven and earth, has promised to be with you each step of the way (Matthew 28:18-20)!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David H. Rhoades". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. David H. Rhoades

Additional resources may be available at www.davidrhoades.org. For any assistance or questions, contact me at david@davidrhoades.org.

Session 1

Disciple-Making: Our One Purpose



God's plan has always been to have a kingdom inhabited with people who believe in him. This was true before sin entered the world, and it remains true today.

When God created humans, he gave us the freedom to obey or disobey him. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, he did not give up on his plan to have a kingdom of believers. God intervened, providing mercy and grace to those who would believe in him. His promise ultimately was fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And “to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

In God's wisdom, he has given us—his children—the privilege and responsibility of sharing this good news with those who do not yet believe in Christ. The one reason we are left on earth is to help others follow Jesus—to be disciple-makers. In this session, you will discover what biblical disciple-making is.



The Great Commission

In your Bible, read the following passage and fill in the blanks:²

Matthew 28:18-20 – *And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ____ therefore and _____ of all nations, _____ them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, _____ them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

Of the four verbs that Jesus used in commissioning us, the verb translated “*make disciples*” is primary. “*Go...baptize...teach*” are supporting verbs. In other words, our one task is to make disciples. We do this by going to the nations with the gospel, baptizing those that believe, and teaching them to follow Jesus.



Disciple-Making is the Task of All Believers

Jesus did not limit the Great Commandment to church leaders. It is for all of us. Church leaders are called to equip God's people to become disciple-makers.

² Suggested answers are located in the last section of this guide.

Jesus designed you to be a disciple-maker. He saved you for this purpose. You bring an understanding, perspectives, and experiences that not only are uniquely yours, but that your friends and loved ones need to hear.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| • Do you know people who need the Lord? (Circle YES or NO) | YES | NO |
| Even if the answer is “NO,” keep going with this guide! You will soon learn some principles on how to befriend people who don't know Christ. | | |
| • Do you know how to lead your friends to Christ? | YES | NO |
| • Do you know how to help your friends grow in their faith after they believe? | YES | NO |

Disciple-Making is a Process that Begins with Evangelism

A close examination of the Great Commission reveals just how comprehensive the task of making disciples is. According to Jesus, disciple-making begins as we go to “the nations” (literally, “the peoples”) with the message of the gospel. The gospel is the story of Jesus.

Read 1 Peter 3:18. How does this verse connect the story of Jesus to our lives today? _____

Disciple-Making is a Process that Continues with Spiritual Growth

Although a popular understanding of the word “discipleship” limits it to “spiritual growth after salvation,” a more biblical understanding of discipleship regards it to be a comprehensive process that includes both evangelism and spiritual growth.

If evangelism alone is the goal, then we would simply make converts, not disciples. Why do you think it is important to help new believers grow? _____

Disciple-Making is a Process that Results in More Disciple-Making

Jesus' plan is for His followers to produce more followers. Disciple-making has not been fulfilled until the disciple has become a disciple-maker himself.

Why is it important for the people you disciple to become disciple-makers? _____

Disciple-Making Defined

A close look at the Great Commission helps give us a simple, comprehensive definition of disciple-making:

Disciple-making is the process of bringing people from unbelief to becoming devoted followers of Jesus who reproduce this process with others.



reflect

1. Who was most instrumental in leading you to Christ? _____
2. Did this individual personally (1-on-1) continue to help you follow Jesus? _____
3. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being poor and 10 being great), how would you rate yourself as a disciple-maker? _____
4. Which of the following do you need to learn and begin to put into practice? (Circle all that apply)

Befriending lost people

Praying for my lost loved ones, friends, and acquaintances

Sharing God's Word with inquisitive people

Leading someone to Christ

Helping a new believer grow spiritually

Session 2

The Two-Part Plan: Farming and Parenting



overview

As we have seen, disciple-making consists of two connected components: evangelism and spiritual growth.

The goal of evangelism is to bring lost people to faith in Christ. It is the Holy Spirit—not you—who produces conversion. Yet He has given you the incredible opportunity and responsibility of having a role in the evangelistic process of others. God saves people as we (1) befriend and pray for the lost, (2) share God's Word with the lost, and (3) tell the gospel to the lost.

The goal of spiritual growth is to help believers become more like Christ. Just like with evangelism, it is the Holy Spirit—not you—who produces spiritual growth as believers yield themselves to the Holy Spirit. Yet He has allowed us to have a role in the spiritual growth of others. God grows believers as we provide them with (1) loving care, (2) a personal example to follow and (3) biblical instruction.

In this session, you will discover a simple and biblical plan to be involved in God's work of helping a person follow Jesus and begin to grow spiritually.



digging deeper

There are many ways to participate in evangelism, and there are many ways to help someone grow spiritually. But does the Bible give us a simple, yet comprehensive disciple-making plan? Yes.

In the Bible, the most widely used analogy to picture evangelism is farming. And the most widely used analogy to picture spiritual growth is parenting. These two images can be the basis of a biblical disciple-making strategy.

Evangelism = Plowing + Planting + Harvesting

Read the following passages of Scripture and write down words or phrases associated with farming:

Mark 4:26-29 - _____

Mark 4:31-32 - _____

Psalm 126:5-6 - _____

John 4:35 - _____

Matthew 9:36-38 - _____

Before a farmer can harvest his crops, he must plant seeds. And unless he is planting seed in “good soil,” he must be ready to plow the field. The same principles are true in evangelism.

As disciple-makers, we are farmers. God's Word instructs us how we can assist the lost people in our lives to follow Christ, regardless of how hard the soil of their hearts might be. If a person's heart is hard, we can befriend him and pray for him. If a person's heart is receptive, we can plant the seed of God's Word in his life. And if a person is ready to be saved, we can share the gospel with him.

Plowing = Befriending and praying for those far from Christ

Planting = Sharing God's Word with inquiring seekers

Harvesting = Leading a willing receiver to Christ

Spiritual Growth = Nurturing + Modeling + Teaching

Read the following passages of Scripture and write down the words or phrases associated with parenting:

Galatians 4:19 - _____

1 Thessalonians 2:7 - _____

1 Peter 2:2 - _____

1 John 2:1 - _____

Hebrews 5:13 - _____

Every parent must provide his or her child with loving care, a personal example, and instructions on how to live. Likewise, new believers need a spiritual parent to provide them with these necessities. And who is a better spiritual parent than someone who was instrumental in leading them to faith in Christ?

As disciple-makers, we are parents. God's Word instructs us how we can assist new believers to grow in Christ. When a person comes to faith in Christ, we must affirm and love him. The new believer also needs a living example of how a Christian lives, as well as our help as he begins to seek nourishment from God's Word.

Nurturing = Affirming and loving new believers

Modeling = Being a living example of a Spirit-filled Christian

Teaching = Providing the nourishment of God's Word

Read the definition of disciple-making again:

Disciple-making is the process of bringing people from unbelief to becoming devoted followers of Jesus who reproduce this process with others.



disciple-making ladder

The process of making a disciple of Jesus can be illustrated with a “Disciple-Making Ladder.” We must do our part as God draws our friends and loved ones up the ladder.

	Your Friend Is...	Your Friend Needs...	You Provide...
↑	A New Baptized Believer Has received Jesus and been baptized	To grow spiritually	<u>Parenting</u> A loving, modeling, and teaching relationship
	A Willing Receiver Ready to receive Jesus	To receive Christ and be baptized	<u>Harvesting</u> The gospel and baptism
	An Inquiring Seeker Has questions about following Jesus	To learn more about following Jesus	<u>Planting</u> God's Word in spoken and written form
	A Disinterested Unbeliever Is lost with little or no interest in Jesus	To become interested in Jesus	<u>Plowing</u> Friendship & intercessory prayer
	Your Friend Is...	Your Friend Needs...	You Provide...

In the following sessions, you will discover some simple, effective ways to plow, plant, harvest, and parent



reflect

1. Who is a lost person you know? If you don't know the person's name, how might you describe him or her (such as “waiter” or “sales clerk”)?
2. As far as you know, which description in the Disciple-Making Ladder best describes your friend (such as “Disinterested Unbeliever”)?
3. Are you willing to do your part as a disciple-maker and leave the results to God?

Session 3

Plowing (Part 1) – Friendship with a Vision



Jesus said, “Love your _____ as yourself” (Matthew 22:39).

For many Christians, the thought of getting to know lost people—much less *love* them—is frightening. Studies show that it only takes a few months for a new believer to lose the vast majority of his friendships with those who do not yet know Christ. As he leaves behind some of his old habits, his friends leave him. By the time the new believer has learned how to share his faith, he may come to the conclusion that he doesn't have much of an audience.

Whether you've been following Christ for a long time or you are a new believer, God uses your words and actions to draw people to Himself. This occurs through the power of relationships.

In this session, you will discover how to make friends with people who have little or no interest in Jesus Christ. It is friendship with a vision—a friendship that loves people so deeply that we envision what it might look like if they began following Jesus.



Read Luke 8:4-15.

The seed (God's Word) remained the same in all four instances, but the results were different. Why did the seed in verse 8 yield a great harvest? It fell into _____.

The lost people in our lives are like the soil Jesus described. Some are “good soil,” ready to receive God's Word. Others are “hard ground,” showing little or no interest in following Jesus. They may be like Paul's description of false teachers in Ephesians 4:18 – *They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.*

What does God want?

God “desires _____ to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). “All” includes those whose hearts are hard toward Him. Your friendship with a lost person may be very instrumental in helping that person follow Christ.

What should I avoid?

You cannot force or manipulate anyone into believing in Christ. The authors of the book *Irresistible Evangelism* describe “seven deadly sins of evangelism”³:

- Scheming – Tricking someone into hearing the gospel
- Scalp hunting – Treating people as if they are just a number or a means to grow your church
- Screaming – Being rude because you are convinced you are right
- Selling – Convincing people to say yes to Jesus as if He were some kind of commodity
- Stalking – Never giving people a chance to make a thoughtful decision
- Sermonizing – Being a Christian who has all the answers
- Spectating – Being too afraid to help people follow Jesus



So what are the elements necessary to become friends with people who do not yet know Christ?

Element #1: Noticing

Have you ever heard a Christian say, “I don’t know any lost people”? The reality is that there are lost people all around us, but sometimes we fail to notice them. Once you start noticing people, you start caring about them.

Noticing Assignment: The next time you spend 30 minutes or more in the community (out of the house and away from your church campus), write down a description or name of the people you encounter: the barista, the person you work with, etc. You’ll be amazed at how many lost people are in your peripheral vision.

Element #2: Small Acts of Kindness

Wherever you go, preach the gospel. And if you must, use words. - St. Francis of Assisi

Jesus used acts of kindness to demonstrate His love. The Bible says that Jesus “*went about _____ and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him*” (Acts 10:38).

Serving lost people with small acts of kindness tears down walls and opens hearts. When you do something kind for a lost person, expect nothing in return, even if the person finds it difficult to receive. You are helping him or her learn how to receive God’s grace.

A heart that loves finds a thousand ways.

A heart that doesn’t find a thousand excuses. - Middle Eastern Proverb

Kindness Assignment: Find one item that you have at your disposal right now (a pen, your shoes, a bottle of water, etc.), and think of one way you can use that item to serve someone in Christ’s name during the coming week.

³ For additional tips relating to servant evangelism, see *Irresistible Evangelism*, by Steve Sjogren, Dave Ping, and Doug Pollock (www.kindnessresources.com).

What is your idea? _____

Element #3: Learning to Listen

“Treat people the same way you want them to treat you” (Matthew 7:12, NASB).

If you want people to listen to you, learn to listen to them first. You must respect people's beliefs—even if you know they are wrong—if you want them to respect yours. With most lost people today, listening to your beliefs about Jesus or the Bible is a right that they allow you to have. Earn the right to be heard by listening.

Talking has the goal of being right, but listening has the goal of understanding what someone else is saying.

By asking questions about others, you can begin to understand them. You show them that you can feel what they are feeling—that you care. Through listening, compassion grows in your heart.

Listening Assignment: This week, ask a lost person about himself or herself without discussing yourself at all. If it is a person you do not know, you may have to pay special attention to something he says or does. For example, if he mentions his children, you can ask questions about them.

Who might you seek out to listen to this week? _____



reflect

1. **Noticing Assignment:** Write out the names or description of some lost people in your life: _____

2. **Kindness Assignment:** What were the results of your idea? _____

3. **Listening Assignment:** What did you learn about the person you listened to? _____

Session 4

Plowing (Part 2) – Praying for Unbelievers



God has chosen us to have a vital role in disciple-making. Not only are we the ones who take the message of the gospel to the lost, but our prayers move God to save.

“Around us is a world lost in sin, above us is a God willing and able to save it; it is ours to build the bridge that links heaven and earth, and prayer is the mighty instrument that does the work.” - E.M. Bounds

God expects us to pray for the lost. During Isaiah's ministry, the nation of Israel was in a terrible situation. Just like the condition of lost people in your life, no one but God could deliver them. The Lord observed that, in spite of their hopelessness, no one was praying: *“He saw that there was no man—He was amazed that there was no one interceding”* (Isaiah 59:16, HCSB). If we do not pray for the lost to be saved, who will?

According to the New Testament, every Christian is a priest. This means, in part, that we represent lost people to the Father, interceding on their behalf. God the Father moves when His people pray for that which He already desires. Jesus said, *“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask _____ you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you _____ and so prove to be my disciples”* (John 15:7-8).

In this session, you will discover how to pray for the lost people in your life.



The Condition of the Lost

The Bible uses vivid images to describe people without Christ. Read each correlating Scripture to discover the impact of God's view of the lost. People without Christ are:

- _____ by the devil – 2 Timothy 2:26
- _____ in a strong man's house – Luke 11:14-23 (Hint: Satan is the strong man, but Jesus is the Stronger Man)
- Under the _____ of the evil one – 1 John 5:19
- _____ of the devil – John 8:43-44
- _____ in sin – Ephesians 2:1
- _____ by Satan – Ephesians 2:2 (Hint: The word “work” means “to be energized or empowered”)
- _____ to the gospel – 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

With our lost loved ones in such a terrible condition, it is imperative that we understand that we are in a battle for souls. The only way they will ever follow Jesus is if God does a work in their lives, and He moves when we pray.

The Scheme of the Enemy: Deception

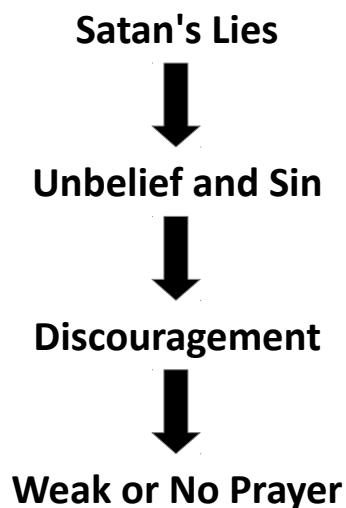
Satan will not give up lost people without a fight. The devil and his forces seek to interrupt your prayers for the lost, but the Holy Spirit in you is greater than Satan (see 1 John 4:4).

Sometimes our prayers become weakened because of sin or unbelief in our hearts. Paul instructs us, *“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil”* (Ephesians 6:11).

As you pray to your Heavenly Father, who is greater than all, be reminded that Satan's power over the lost has been stripped away. Hebrews 2:14 says, *“Through death [Jesus] might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.”*

But if Satan has no power, how does he hold people in spiritual captivity? Through deception. Satan cannot do anything on his own authority except lie. *“When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a _____ and the _____”* (John 8:44).

When Satan lies to unbelievers, it is designed to keep them from believing in Jesus. When he lies to believers, it is designed to keep us weak and ineffective. The pattern of Satan's lies to believers is always the same:



The Power of God's Word

“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth” (John 17:17).

The only effective weapon against Satan's lies is the truth of God's Word. In each instance that Jesus encountered Satan's lies, Jesus quoted Scripture (see Matthew 4:1-11). Jesus hid God's Word in his heart, and we must do the same.

We will discover more about this principle in Session 5.

Attitudes of Prayer

Remain humble. Confess your sins. Keep on the armor of God (cf. Ephesians 6:11-18).

Intercede with the right motive: God's glory (cf. John 15:8). Praying for a good thing with the wrong motive (such as a parent praying for a child to be saved out of pride for the family name) will render your prayers null and void.

Pray with faith. The Great Commission—our command to be disciple-makers—begins with Jesus saying, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matthew 28:18). We must believe that Jesus can save the lost, and we must pray like it. Jesus gave us the authority to attack the gates of hell (cf. Matthew 16:18-19).



looking closer

How to Pray for the Lost⁴

Pray for lost people by name.

- Pray for God to bless the person. *“God's kindness is meant to lead you to _____”* (Romans 2:4).
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to convict the person without Christ. Jesus said about the Holy Spirit, *“And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not _____ in me”* (John 16:8-9).
- Pray for God to illuminate the lost person's mind. *“For God...has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”* (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Pray for the person who shares the gospel. God may allow you to be the witness, or He may have someone else share the gospel with the person. Whomever the witness is, pray that the gospel will be presented clearly and boldly. *“[Pray] that I may make it _____, which is how I ought to speak”* (Colossians 4:3).

Pray for an open door to share the gospel. Paul asked the church at Colossae to pray for him as he shared the gospel: *“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ”* (Colossians 4:3-4).



reflect

1. What specific strategies does Satan use to cause discouragement and a lack of effective prayer in your life? _____

⁴ For additional tips in praying for the lost, see *Praying Effectively for the Lost* by Lee Thomas (www.pelministries.org).

2. Who is someone (or multiple people) that you will pray for today and on a regular basis? _____

Session 5

Planting – Sharing God's Word with Inquiring Seekers



As you befriend (Session 3) and pray for (Session 4) lost people in your life, God will begin to turn their hearts into “good soil.” It may take longer than you wish, so be patient. Keep plowing the ground with love and prayer.

*And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap,
if we _____. (Galatians 6:9)*

When a person without Christ is receptive to the things of God, your task is to simply plant seeds. In other words, tell the person what God's Word says. But how do you know when a person is receptive, and what kind of “seed” should you plant?

You will discover how to tell when someone in your life is interested in Christ, as well as what to do at that point.



How To Know When Someone Is Receptive to God

We are not mind-readers. There is only one way we can know what God is doing in someone's heart: Listen to their words. Words expose our hearts.

“For the mouth speaks out of that which _____ the heart” (Matthew 12:34).

When lost people in your life start to ask questions about Jesus or the Bible or about spiritual things, take notice. It means their hearts may be softening. The Lord is making effective your prayers and love.

Many times people are receptive to God when facing a crisis or other stresses (such as a move or a new baby). Sometimes people are receptive when religious ideas are part of a larger social discussion (such as at Easter). But people are almost always most receptive toward someone they know.

In **Luke 10:1-11**, Jesus directed his disciples to share the gospel with a “son of peace” (a receptive man) who had influence over his household. The people in man's sphere of influence would in turn be receptive to him. The disciples later continued this methodology to spread the gospel rapidly in the first century (see the use of the word “house” or “household” in Acts 5:42; 11:13-14; 16:15, 30-34).

People without Christ are most receptive to people they know—people in their sphere of influence.

What To Do When Someone Is Receptive to God

When someone is receptive to God, we simply plant the seed of God's Word in his heart. In other words, speak God's Word to inquiring seekers. With gentleness, tell them what the Bible says about their question.

In 2 Timothy 2:24, we learn that the Lord's servant must correct his opponents *"with _____". God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth."*

In the course of normal conversations, you can begin to plant the seed of God's Word in the good soil of lost people you know. When a complete gospel presentation is not possible, you can still show how the Bible is relevant to their lives.

But What Should I Say?

There are numerous resources and books that can give you or inquiring seekers biblical guidance.⁵ But there is no substitute for speaking God's Word to someone else in the course of normal conversation. To do this, you first must have God's Word in *your* mind and heart. You can only plant the seeds that you possess.

Psalm 119:11-16 gives us advice on how to possess the Word of God within us.

Treasure God's Word in your heart. *"I have stored up your word in my _____, that I might not sin against you"* (Psalm 119:11). To memorize a verse of Scripture, follow these steps:

- Open up your Bible.
- Read the verse.
- Say it out loud.
- Say it out loud without looking.

Ask God to teach you His Word. *"Blessed are you, O Lord; teach me your statutes!"* (Psalm 119:12). The Holy Spirit must be your Teacher.

Teach God's Word to others. *"With my lips I declare all the rules of your mouth"* (Psalm 119:13). The best students are teachers.

Rejoice in God's Word. *"In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches... I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word"* (Psalm 119:14, 16).

Meditate on God's Word. *"I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways"* (Psalm 119:15).



reflect

Whatever date today is, read that corresponding chapter in the **Book of Proverbs**. For example, if today is the 12th, read Proverbs 12. With 31 chapters, reading one chapter each day will enable you to start possessing the seeds of God's wisdom to plant in the heart of others.

⁵ One of the best topical Scripture guides on the Internet is found at www.openbible.info/topics.

In your reading, what truths did the Holy Spirit bring to your attention? _____

Session 6

Harvesting: Leading a Willing Receiver to Christ



Those who sow in tears shall _____ with shouts of joy! He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him (Psalm 126:5-6).

The harvest is a joy for the farmer. Likewise, there is nothing more exciting than helping someone receive Christ.

Using the analogy of giving birth, Jesus described receiving him this way: *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is _____ he cannot see the kingdom of God”* (John 3:3). The new birth is an act of the Holy Spirit, and he is looking for people who will care for his children.

In this session, you will discover when and how to share Jesus with someone. And remember this, every time you share the gospel, you cannot fail. It is God's work—not yours—to turn a person's heart to Him. Jesus said, *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him”* (John 6:44).



When to Share Jesus

Because the Holy Spirit dwells in your life, he will prompt you and guide you as you help your friends follow Jesus. Learn to listen to him. Ask the Holy Spirit if it is time for you to speak.

You also need to listen to your lost friend. While it is never a bad idea to share the gospel, your friend will usually tell you that he is ready. He may say something like:

- “I've been thinking about Jesus. Tell me more.”
- “How do you think a person gets to heaven?”
- “I want what you have.”
- “I need that peace in my life that you talk about.”

How To Share Jesus

There are many ways to share the gospel:

- **Your story** – The most personal way is to tell your friend **your story** about how you received Christ. Your

story might contain three parts: (1) What your life was like *before* Christ, (2) *how* you came to faith in Christ, and (3) what your life is like *after* receiving Christ.

- **1 Peter 3:18** – If you only have a moment to share Christ, the entire gospel is contained in this verse: *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit* (1 Peter 3:18, NIV).
- **An evangelistic tract** – You can always read an **evangelistic tract** with your friend. *Steps to Peace with God* or the *Eternal Life Witnessing Booklet*⁶ are both helpful.

Another great and easy way to share the gospel has been developed by Bill Fay, who wrote ***Share Jesus Without Fear***.⁷ It is based on two biblical principles:

1. *“Faith comes from hearing”* (Romans 10:17). Using his method, you will ask your friend to read Bible verses out loud.
2. *Jesus said to him, “What is written in the Law? How do you read it?”* (Luke 10:26). Jesus was able to discuss Scripture without starting an argument. “How do you read it?” is not a defense or an argument. All you have to do is listen to your friend's answer.

In this method, your only job is to turn Bible pages and stay out of God's way. The Holy Spirit will help your friend understand more from a simple reading of a verse than any explanation you could give. The more your friend deals directly with the Word of God, the more powerful the witness becomes.

To use this method of sharing the gospel, you need to do some preparatory work by marking your Bible.

1. In the front of your Bible, write down “Romans 3:23.” This is a reminder to begin at this verse.
2. Turn to Romans 3:23 and highlight (or underline) the verse. Write “Romans 6:23” in the margin.
3. Highlight Romans 6:23 and write “John 3:3” in the margin.
4. Highlight John 3:3 and write “John 14:6” in the margin. Also, draw a cross next to John 3:3. After your friend reads this verse, you will ask, “Why did Jesus come to die?”
5. Highlight John 14:6 and write “Romans 10:9-11” in the margin.
6. Highlight Romans 10:9-11 and write “2 Corinthians 5:15” in the margin.
7. Highlight 2 Corinthians 5:15 and write “Revelation 3:20” in the margin.

When it is time to share the gospel, follow these simple instructions:

1. Beginning at Romans 3:23, ask your friend to read the verse aloud.
2. After the verse is read, ask, “What does this mean to you?” Listen to your friend's answers. If he doesn't

⁶ Both of these tracts are available from LifeWay Christian Stores (www.lifeway.com).

⁷ For additional tips in sharing the gospel, see *Share Jesus Without Fear* by Bill Fay (www.lifeway.com).

yet understand, don't correct him—just ask him to read it again. Let God speak through His Word.

3. Once he gets the answer correct, turn to the next verse that you have written in the margin and continue with each Scripture.

When your friend is finished reading all the Scriptures, ask these key questions (you may want to write them in the back of your Bible as a reminder):

1. Are you a sinner?
2. Do you want forgiveness for your sins?
3. Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross for you and rose again?
4. Are you willing to surrender your life to Jesus Christ?
5. Are you willing to invite Jesus into your life?

Then you can either ask your friend to pray his own prayer to receive Christ, or you can help your friend voice a prayer of faith, such as this:

Heavenly Father, I have sinned against you. I want forgiveness for all my sins. I believe that Jesus died on the cross for me and rose again. Father, I give you my life to do with as you wish. I want Jesus Christ to come into my life. Amen.



reflect

Which of the gospel sharing methods will you try? Circle all that apply and write out your reasons why.

- **Your story** – _____

- **1 Peter 3:18** – _____

- **Evangelistic tract** – _____

- **Share Jesus Without Fear method** – _____

- **Other** – _____

Session 7

Parenting: Helping a New Believer Grow



As we discovered in Session 2, the most prevalent analogy in the Bible that describes bringing a lost person to faith in Christ is farming. But once a person receives Christ, the analogy changes to that of parenting.

When a baby is born, none of us would say to it, “Well, I’m glad you’re here. Let me give you a few instructions: You’ll want to feed and water yourself. And make sure you clean yourself. Our family lives just a few miles away. Hope to see you there soon.” A baby needs more nurture and care than that.

New believers need an extra level of care and attention. They are God’s children, and he expects us to care for them. In this session, you will discover the importance of baptism and one-on-one spiritual parenting.



Baptism

When we think about baptism⁸, there are five questions to answer:

1. **Why?** Jesus commanded it (Matthew 28:19-20). It is symbolic of death to sin and being made alive to righteousness (Romans 6:1-6)
2. **Where?** Water (Mark 1:9-11)
3. **Who?** A follower of Jesus (John 4:1-2; Matthew 28:19-2; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; Acts 10:47-48)
4. **How?** Immersion (Mark 1:9-11)
5. **When?** Immediately (Acts 8:36-38)

When a nail is cinched, it is driven through wood and then bent down on the other side, securing it from being pulled out. Baptism is similar to that, in that it connects a very memorable experience to the new believer’s relationship with Christ. Baptism should be the first act of obedience of a new believer.

Baptism has also been described to be like a wedding ring. It is an outward, public display of a commitment of the heart.

When you lead someone to Christ, share these basic ideas with him to encourage him to be baptized as soon as

⁸ For a brief, yet comprehensive study on baptism, visit www.t4tonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/3b-Baptism-resources.pdf.

possible.

One-on-One Spiritual Parenting

As we have seen in Session 2, one-on-one spiritual parenting is biblical. It provides:

Nurturing = Affirming and loving new believers

Modeling = Being a living example of a Spirit-filled Christian

Teaching = Providing the nourishment of God's Word

Many Christians feel unequipped to be a spiritual parent simply because they never had it modeled to them. Instead, most of us have grown accustomed to a two-level approach to spiritual growth of (1) large-scale worship and (2) small groups.

However, a new Christian may have very intense or intimate questions that must be addressed if he is to grow as he should. Both large-scale worship and small groups are good, but neither approach can give a deep level of intimate, personalized life-transformation. That requires one-on-one interaction in an atmosphere of mutual trust, transparency, and confidentiality—a spiritual parent.

But we were _____ among you, like a nursing _____ taking care of her own children (1 Thessalonians 2:7).

Sometimes a spiritual parent will be **like a mother** of a newborn. The most important thing a mother can give her infant is not information, nor is it to correct every mistake the child makes. A mother gives individualized attention and care to each child, making them secure in her love and acceptance.

For you know how, like a _____ with his children, we _____ each one of you and _____ you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12).

Sometimes a spiritual parent will be **like a father**. A father instills confidence in his child with exhortation and encouragement. When a child says, "I can't," a father replies, "I'm with you. We'll do it together." New believers need someone like that to cheer for them.

The people you lead to Christ need a spiritual parent here on earth that they can follow.

Remember the Goal: Reproducing Disciples

Maturity is the desired end. In the physical world, maturity occurs when a plant, tree, or animal reproduces. The spiritual disciples you make will reproduce, continuing the chain of spiritual generations. This is the key to fulfilling the Great Commission.

"The primary objective in discipleship is to bring your disciple to the point of 'digging his own well' (to drink from the Word) and lose his dependence on you." - Chris Adist in Personal Disciple Making



reflect

Practically speaking, if you lead someone to Christ, what do you do next?

- Encourage your friend to be baptized.
- Get your friend a Bible if he does not have one already.
- Keep your friend in close fellowship with other Christians—including yourself. His new spiritual family can provide him with friendship and guidance.
- Help your friend grow spiritually. One resource that may help is the second section of this guide called **Spiritual Basics**. It is a handful of spiritual parenting lessons that are free to download and copy at www.faithtrainer.com. When you lead someone to Christ, offer to meet together (perhaps once a week). You can give your friend a copy of Spiritual Basics and suggest working through it together.

Appendix – Suggested Answers

Session 1

Matthew 28:18-20 – *And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

1 Peter 3:18 tells us why Jesus died: to bring us to God. People today need to hear that message.

It is important to help new believers grow so they will become strong in their faith and continue to follow Jesus every day.

The people I disciple must become disciple-makers because there are lost people in their lives that they are uniquely suited to reach for Christ.

Session 2

Mark 4:26-29 – seed, ground, sprouts, grows, blade, ear, grain, ripe, sickle, harvest

Mark 4:31-32 – grain, seed, sown, grows

Psalms 126:5-6 – sow, reap, seed, sheaves

John 4:35 – harvest, fields, white for harvest

Matthew 9:36-38 – harvest, laborers, Lord of the harvest, his harvest

Galatians 4:19 – little children, childbirth

1 Thessalonians 2:7 – nursing mother taking care of her own children

1 Peter 2:2 – newborn infants, pure spiritual milk, grow up

1 John 2:1 – little children

Hebrews 5:13 – milk, child

Session 3

“Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39).

It fell into good soil.

God “*desires all people (or all men) to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*” (1 Timothy 2:4).

The Bible says that Jesus “*went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him*” (Acts 10:38).

Session 4

Jesus said, “*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples*” (John 15:7-8).

- Captured by the devil – 2 Timothy 2:26
- Possessions in a strong man's house – Luke 11:14-23 (Hint: Satan is the strong man, but Jesus is the Stronger Man)
- Under the sway of the evil one – 1 John 5:19
- Children of the devil – John 8:43-44
- Dead in sin – Ephesians 2:1
- Empowered by Satan – Ephesians 2:2 (Hint: The word “work” means “to be energized or empowered”)
- Blinded to the gospel – 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

“When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44).

“God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance” (Romans 2:4).

Jesus said about the Holy Spirit, *“And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me” (John 16:8-9).*

“[Pray] that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak” (Colossians 4:3).

Session 5

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. (Galatians 6:9)

“For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart” (Matthew 12:34).

In 2 Timothy 2:24, we learn that the Lord's servant must correct his opponents *“with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth.”*

“I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you” (Psalm 119:11).

Session 6

“Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him” (Psalm 126:5-6).

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

Session 7

“But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children” (1 Thessalonians 2:7).

“For you know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory” (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12).